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The Language of Affliction:

A

SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE

DEATH OF ADELINE RIDER,

DELIVERED IN THE

REF. DUTCH CHURCH OF CHATHAM,

ON

SABBATH, FEBRUARY 1, 1846.

BY THE REV. E. S. PORTER,

PASTOR OF SAID CHURCH.



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PRINTED BY J. MUNSELL.
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This sermon is published by the friends of the deceased, and to them it is respectfully inscribed, by their friend and pastor ; who, while deeply sympathizing with them in their recent bereavement, most earnestly commends them to the grace of an all-sufficient Saviour.

FUNERAL SERMON.

JOB II., 10.

What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

No condition in life can exempt us from trials and calamities. They form a part, and a prominent part of our earthly possessions. The defenceless poor cannot ward off the blows which will successively fall upon them; nor can the most princely fortune purchase immunity from the ills incident to our present existence. Learning has no spell by which it may charm the hard features of adversity; nor can ignorance shield itself from the many arrows which are flying around. The feebleness of age, and the helplessness of infancy, are not beyond the reach of evil; nor can the strong man, who glorieth in his strength, say to the hand of Providence, thus far shalt thou come, but no farther.

But while no rank or condition can escape from the troubles of this brief pilgrimage, it is in various ways that God puts to our lips the cup of bitterness. Sometimes it is by despoiling us of our goods, and casting us out upon the cold and freezing charity of the world. Sometimes the hand of disease presses upon us, and our bodies are racked with pain and

suffering. Frequently we are betrayed by our familiar friends, and hard ingratitude and cold neglect are returned for unwearied kindness. Sometimes our fondest and most cherished hopes are blasted as in a moment, and we are left to all the bitterness of disappointment. And often, too, God sends the dark Angel of Death to our homes. The shadow of his wing falls upon those whom a fond affection has idolized, and they are snatched from our embrace, and hurried off to the cold and unfeeling grave. The winds of winter howl over their resting place, but they heed them not. The warm spring-time, with its sunshine and its flowers, will cast the mantle of its light over their place of sepulture, but darkness and corruption will reign beneath.

Yes, sorrow is everywhere. No lot in life so favored as to be beyond the reach of its visitations; no clime so fair and beautiful as to be forever cloudless and serene; no home so happy as to be undisturbed by the heavy tread and melancholy footsteps of a bowed and stricken mourner.

And it is well for us to remember this; for too often are we disposed to think, that the trials which we are called to endure are singularly hard and oppressive. The heart, it is true, knows its own bitterness best. The children of affliction feel the arrow far more sensibly and poignantly, than they can conceive who never have been pierced. But in studying the ways of Providence, we will find that we are social, even in our griefs; that while *we* are bowing under the stroke of a present calami-

ty, many a heart and many an eye are sighing and weeping with like afflictions. For happiness and suffering are far more equally distributed, than we might, without due reflection, be disposed to think.

Every heart has its own peculiar sorrow; every bosom its bleeding wound. And why should it not be thus? Why should sinful man be free from chastisement? If there were no God ruling over the subjects of his moral empire; if there were no just and necessary connection between sin and sorrow, then we might perhaps be justified in murmuring because of the calamities which fall upon us.

But "what! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

That *the Holiest* and *the Best* is constantly lavishing benefits upon us, in every position which we occupy, cannot be denied, and should never be forgotten. The strong pulsations of divine love are constantly prompting the hand of our Heavenly Father to the bestowment of the richest gifts. The morning sun is the herald of our Great Friend in his daily visitations; and the evening star, as it glows and glitters in the nightly firmament, is but the emblem of that all-seeing eye, which never slumbers, nor sleeps, but is ever watching over us. "In God we live, and move, and have our being." But it is strange, so blind are the eyes of our understandings, and so stupid are our hearts, that we often vainly and wickedly imagine that, because divine favors are so frequent and so regular, therefore we are entitled to them by right; and that when in wis-

dom he withholds what we most anxiously desire, he is either unkind or unmindful of us.

Far rather should we ask, with the venerable patriarch of old, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

This, we believe, is a question which seldom presents itself to our minds. So accustomed are we to look to a beneficent God for direct and positive blessings, that it is difficult for us to feel how deserving we are of evil; and hard for us to see that our Heavenly Father may manifest his goodness towards us, as well by striking us to the dust, as in lifting us to the loftiest heights of external prosperity.

But let us confine our attention to some considerations suggested by the text selected as the subject of our meditations on this occasion.

We should expect evil from the hand of God, because we deserve it.

There is no character on earth unsullied in the sight of God, no integrity that is spotless, no life so correct as not to merit censure from Him who cannot look upon sin. The praises of the world may pamper our vanity, and feed the greediness of our self-esteem; the whirl of pleasure and the hot pursuit of the perishable, may beguile our judgments, may pervert or silence the language of conscience, may turn aside for a season the rays of truth; but when the hour of honest and severe reflection arrives, when the soul exercises the high office of a judge upon itself, when thoughts and motives and actions are all weighed in the balance of strict

and unerring truth; *it is then* that the result of our self-communion will coincide with and illustrate that holy word, which declares, in the plainest language, the guilt of the human heart. And although we may be slow to set about a duty of this kind, though our pride may revolt at a self-acknowledged unworthiness and guilt, yet the fact remains unalterably the same. While we may be disposed to search Heaven and Earth for apologies whereby to palliate and excuse our transgressions, after all, when we stand revealed to ourselves, we shall be ready to confess with the manly humility of David, "Against Thee have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight."

We are born under the curse of a violated law. One great legacy hath been handed down to us through a long line of ancestry, and that is, a disposition to sin. We are by nature the children of wrath. No refinement of education, no polish of manners, no cunning counterfeiting of virtue, no costly sacrifices at the shrine of an unconquered selfishness, can destroy the deadly virus within. The passions still remain disordered and perverted. The understanding may have an eye, but it lingers not with delight upon the glory and the holiness of God. Who shall say that a nature thus offensive to infinite purity, does not merit evil, however much Grace may lavish kindness upon it?

And if Grace, with all its renewing energies, conquer, and the quickening spirit implant the seeds of heavenly vitality, even then the deceitfulness of sin still lingers around the citadel in which the

Saviour hath broken the sceptre and the throne of evil. The heart is still the place of contrary and conflicting emotions, and so long as the flesh endures, so long will those desires, which are of the flesh, lead us but too frequently astray, weaken gracious affections, and impair the power of gracious truths upon our hearts.

The soothing language of the world's friendship may fall in sweet cadences upon our ears; an unbaptized and false philosophy may advance lofty views of the purity of human nature; and a vicious self-confidence may dupe us into a false estimate, both of our own merits and our own guilt; but the rule by which the Omniscient Mind measures our motives and our conduct, is far different from that which we employ in estimating the characters of our fellow men. That *Mind* looks beneath every exterior, penetrates every fair disguise, and beholds the thoughts, the intents, the purposes of our hearts. Our secret as well as our more public sins are in the light of his countenance. And if our moral nature is thus scrutinized by the Holy One, surely we must confess how guilty we become in his sight.

If, in addition to this, we take into the account the manner in which we pervert God's goodness; how we use his very benefits as instruments of rebellion against him; how we abuse the unnumbered mercies of his hand, by employing them in modes most contrary to his will; how we neglect the sacred obligations under which we are placed, by substituting self in the room of the Creator, and giving our affections and our services to the finite,

instead of the Infinite: then indeed must we acknowledge, with the deepest humility, that we are unprofitable servants; and a review of our lives, contrasted with the divine patience and forbearance, will compel us to exclaim, in all sincerity, "why should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?"

Yes, God's benefits to us are all of his abounding love; the sorrows which He sends are all of desert. If we have made that most difficult of all attainments, the knowledge of ourselves, we will be ready, both in prosperity and in adversity, to say, in the language of the text, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

We proceed to remark, *That we should expect evil from the hand of God as well as good, if we observe the tenor of his dealings with his most favored children.*

The scriptures of truth no where give assurances that the most eminent attainments in piety will secure their possessors a smooth and easy pathway through this world. The way wherein they must walk is a way of rocks, of pits. Sometimes it leads through dark and shaded valleys; sometimes over barren, wild, rugged mountains, where the tempests make their home, and where the winds sweep in ruthless fury.

"In this world ye shall have tribulation," was the declaration of our blessed Lord — He who came to speak peace, to wipe away the tears of sorrow, to relieve the anguished heart; whose every word was goodness, whose every act was grace.

He never pledged to his followers a full fruition of happiness, while wearing the garments of earth, and treading its thorn-planted ways. Crosses they must bear, and he plainly told them this; calamities would befall them, and this he did not conceal.

That Providence, which is God in action, illustrates and confirms the pledges of his word. The most eminent saints in every generation have been subjected to sore trials and calamities, sent upon them for the perfecting of their faith and patience. Jehovah has refined them, but not with silver. He hath chosen them in the furnace of affliction. That cloud of witnesses to the power of faith, men of whom the world was not worthy; whose eulogy hath been written by Paul; whose holy lives have caused the church and the world to cherish the fragrance of their memories—each was led through many and severe scenes of trial and discipline. Look at the venerable author of our text. How quickly is the brightness of his prosperity changed into the gloom and tempest of adversity; so that he cries out, “My face is foul with weeping, and on mine eyelids is the shadow of death;” yet with the confidence of faith you hear him exclaim, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.”

Follow the histories of David, of Jeremiah, of Paul, of Peter—saints under the old and saints under the new testament dispensation—you will find that the waters of a full cup were poured out to them. Theirs was not a primrose path of easy dalliance; their way was not softened by the sweetness of yielding flowers; but their march was

amid cloud, and storm, and fire; and albeit cohorts of angels were in attendance, to cheer and strengthen, yet must they be trained and disciplined by lessons of affliction, for the possession of an unbroken rest in the heavenly world. Their trials may not perhaps be regarded in the light of punishments, but they were the chastisements of a parent, who sought to refine and purify his children.

Yes, in every age and in every clime, they whose path seemed encompassed with a heavenly radiance, whose steps were firmly set in the journey toward the blessed land, whose spirits were most illuminated by the light of saving truth, these were they whose names were synonymous with suffering. At the fires burning around her sons, *Truth* has kindled her brightest torches; from the lips of God's most deeply afflicted children, *Piety* has culled its most enrapturing language; and over the fragments of a broken heart, *Grace* has achieved its divinest victories. In the sublime visions of the sage of Patmos, we hear the elder saying, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Thus it is that God takes the hearts of his children, and breaks them down, and then reconstructs them into a temple, where the Holy Spirit dwells, to comfort and to guide.

Even our blessed Lord became "a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief." For it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all

things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Though he were perfect in himself, yet bearing as he did the imputed guilt of his people, he must ascend to the possession of his mediatorial throne, amid scoffings and cruel mockings, amid the assaults of Earth and Hell; over the ground which he had watered with his tears; from the cross, which he consecrated by his blood.

If such has been the course of our Father's dealings with those who walked constantly before him, and participated most in his favor, shall not we all, unworthy as we are, glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; for that hope will be an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil.

Thus it is that God oftentimes sends sorest trials, only that he may manifest his richest goodness; he wounds that he may heal, he prostrates that he may elevate. "Call upon me," is his language, "in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

Moreover, *We should expect evil from the hand of God, if we rightly apprehend the benevolence of the Divine character.*

Delightful indeed is the assurance that God is Love. To know that that Almighty Being who holds the universe in his hand and directs the stupendous machinery of an unmeasured creation in obedience to his all-controlling will; at whose voice

the firm foundations of the Earth do tremble; at whose command the Heavens and the Earth shall flee away, to know that the great Ruler of all, as he marshals the planets in their orbits, and feeds the ravens when they cry; as he wields the forces of the moral world, lifting up the humblest, and abasing the haughty; to know that He in whose presence we are as nothing, and in whose hands our destinies are, is Love, is one of the most cheering and most consolatory of all truths of which we are capable of obtaining possession.

But it is in manifold and various ways that the Being whose name is Love, manifests his goodness to his sinful subjects. It is not only through the thousand channels of the open world around us; it is not only through the multiplied mercies of daily life; not only through the holy sufferer on the brow of Calvary; but also in the trials which he sends, and in the afflictions which he despatches, to the children of men. In all these, God evidences the benevolence of his character. We may affirm that the goodness of the Highest is a pledge that he will send afflictions and chastisements upon us.

The sun not only warms and invigorates the flower by the brightness of his rays, but he also gathers in the firmament the dark and seemingly angry cloud, that it may discharge its fertilizing treasures upon the soil whereon that flower grows. So it is with God's love; that, too, often gathers the clouds of adversity around us, in order that our hearts may be moistened and enriched by their de-

scending influences; causing us to believe, with the Poet:

“ Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like a toad, ugly and venomous,
Bears yet a precious jewel in his head.”

If to know God, to realize our dependence upon him, to feel how utterly helpless we are in the achievement of aught that is good, without his grace to assist; to live with a consciousness of our unworthiness, and a consequent reliance upon a Saviour; if all these and more be great and prime duties, with which it is in the highest degree necessary we should be acquainted, if we would secure an endless life, then must we grant that affliction may be regarded as an evidence of the love of God. For afflictions, if properly interpreted, convey to us the most salutary instructions.

Affliction teaches us God's sovereignty. While we may be ready at all times to acknowledge with our lips the supremacy of the all-wise; yet how frequently is the thought banished from our minds; how seldom does it exercise a practical influence on our hearts. So distasteful is this truth to the spiritual palate of man, that it is oftentimes the last which he is willing to receive; and it too frequently happens that resistance to this truth is prolonged to such an extent, that eternity is left to communicate it with a horrible clearness. The language, however, which God speaks through every affliction is, “Be still, and know that I am God.” It was thus that Jehovah instructed his ancient cove-

nant people, and such too is the meaning of those grievous calamities which became our portion. And this fact—the Lord reigneth—should go far to soften the pride and obduracy of our hearts. The tendency and disposition of sin is to proclaim a declaration of independence even of the Creator, to deny his authority over us, and dispute his claims to our undivided affections and services. Upon the pride of our unsubdued natures the light of prosperity falls oftentimes only to foster and strengthen the rebellious passions of our souls.

When the voyage of life seems all smooth and easy; when favoring winds waft us onward, and every swelling of the water does but give a fresh impetus to our barks; it is then that we are too apt to place a boastful reliance upon our own wisdom and skill, forgetful of that Almighty Pilot, “who rideth upon the wings of the wind, and whose path is in the deep waters:” but when the storms arise, and the winds beat upon us with furious energy, then, as once on the stormy Sea of Galilee, the prayer gushes from the heart, “Lord save, or we perish.” Prosperity pampers our pride, adversity humbles it; prosperity fans our confidence in the might of man, affliction chases away the delusion, and bids us trust in the living God.

So strange and yet so true it is that even through the gloom and darkness of present sorrow, we are able to discern the awful form of truth more distinctly than when surrounded by the splendor and dazzled by the blaze of a noon-tide prosperity. As the darkness of night is necessary to reveal unto us

the countless orbs of Heaven, so in the night time of sorrow and care, those truths, all radiant with the light of God's love, and which had been quite unseen before, emit those cheering rays which melt the icy fetters of the heart, and open the long sealed fountains of gratitude and joy and trust in the Father of lights.

And very strong too is the tendency of affliction to wean us from the idolatry of the world.

Our unsanctified emotions and desires are constantly impelling us onward in the undirected and excessive pursuit of the perishable. The trifles of time stand out on the extended mass of anticipation as so many mountains of gold, or as so many gorgeous temples of happiness, for the attainment of which the heart beats with its highest pulse, and the nerves are strung to the greatest endurance. Years, with all their accumulated stores of experience, may demonstrate that disappointments have been far more numerous than our successes, and that even when our cheeks have been flushed with the joy of realized hopes, there has come over us a sadness and a blight, bidding us know that the trail of the serpent leads over all the pleasures derived from an earthly source. They are

"Born like the brilliance of the sun-set sky,
To glow a moment, and as soon to die."

Our plans, constructed on the most clear-sighted calculations of human wisdom, have been at fault. The dreams of ambition have faded like the exhalations of the dawn. The hardest toil has resulted but too frequently in plucking the apples of Sodom

and the clusters of Gomorrah. Poorly indeed does the world repay her votaries; to the man of pleasure she gives sickness of soul; to the worshipper of gold she gives a glittering casket, filled with anxiety and care—the true Pandora's box of ancient fable; to the seeker of fame she extends a roll lighter than gossamer, inscribed with characters as unintelligible as the voice of music in the ear of Death.

But notwithstanding the beggarly wages received in the world's service, we are loath to leave it, until the thunder mutters over our heads, and the blow falls which dissolves the spell and breaks the enchantment. When the objects on which we have centered our regards are taken from us; when the streams of earthly joys are dried up; when we stand on the broken fragments of the fair fabrics of earthly happiness, which we had fondly reared; then do we behold the truth realized—

“He builds too low, who builds beneath the skies.”

Yes, afflictions tell us most emphatically, that this is not our home. They bid us arise and thread the way to the brightness and purity of an eternal habitation. If there be sorrow here, there is joy on high. If there be pain and anguish on Earth, there is a clime where every breath is happiness, and every sound is love. And how explicit is the language which the trials and tribulations of Earth speak unto us. By sundering the cords of worldly attachment, by revealing the poverty and shallowness of present enjoyments, God would woo us

away from the shadows of time to the substantial realities of another world. Thus, to use the language of the gracious Leighton, "Under the habit of Judgment, Love walks and works." Thus our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are designed to work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

You will permit me to observe in the next place, that *Every affliction which we are called to endure, should be ascribed primarily, to the power of the Holiest.*

Chance and accident have no place in the empire of Jehovah. Amid all the apparent disorder and confusion which exist in the moral world, there is still the movement of a most celestial wisdom and harmony. He who sees the end from the beginning, who holds in his hand the stupendous issues of the universe, while he employs material agents and natural causes in the evolution of his all-glorious designs, is nevertheless present to give efficiency to every agent and every second cause. Too frequently do the eyes of our understandings rest only upon the outward visible instruments of divine power, and we lose sight of that almighty hand which gives direction and efficiency to those instruments. Laws exist both in the natural and in the moral world; but those laws have no energy independent of the will of their author. The laws by which a planet is impelled in its orbit, and by which a sparrow falls to the ground, are only the *modes* by which the Almighty executes the purposes of his will. Let us not then banish God in idea from his creation: let us recognize his hand as well

in the death of an insect, as in the creation of a world; as well in the departure of a child beloved, as in the fall of the mightiest nations. He, in the height of whose infinity all distinctions between great and small are as nothing, presides over the affairs of our habitations, as well as over the ranks of adoring seraphim. While he counts the starry hosts, yet does he also number the hairs of our heads; and although his providence may be like the mystic car which Ezekiel saw, moving in a sublime grandeur, which sets at naught our feeble comprehension, let us however believe that there is a mighty and all-wise spirit within those wheels, directing them in the best ways.

And how precious and consoling is this truth to our hearts, when the hour of harsh and severe trial arrives. We look then upon afflictions, not as the frowning spectres of a gloomy fatalism; not as the accidents of a chance-governed world, but as the messengers of the Father of our being, chastening in wisdom, and grieving in love. Then we are taught with submissive confidence to say, "shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right? Clouds and darkness may surround the throne, but righteousness and justice sway the sceptre. The bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench, until he bring forth judgment unto victory. He doth not willingly grieve or afflict the children of men, but for their good. Knowing these invaluable truths, we may glory even in tribulation, if the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts. And when we have ascended

to the heights of Calvary, and survey the afflictions of time from that sacred eminence, they will appear to us like those clouds which sometimes come over the face of the sun, but while there, are suffused with a heavenly and a glorious radiance.

But if God wounds, he alone is able to heal.

To whom else shall we go but unto him? He hath the words of eternal life. The language of a heartless philosophy has no balm for the wounded soul. The light of earthly pleasure in the house of mourning, is but as the taper burning in the death-damps of the vault; it may throw a ghastly brightness over the mouldering fragments of corruption, but has no power to dispel the darkness which shrouds the gate of the grave.

But there is one who can sympathize and console. He was touched with a feeling of our infirmities. What language is this! *He was touched with a feeling of our infirmities.* Blessed Jesus! thou didst taste every sorrow, bear every grief. In the presence of the bereaved he wept, and over the sorrows of the wounded heart he heaved the sigh of tender compassion.

We may follow the loved and the lost to the dark and silent grave. But Christ himself hath entered its portals, and over the conquered form of Death hath proclaimed himself the resurrection and the life, so that while we resign the forsaken form to the embrace of corruption, we know— we know that that corruptible shall put on incorruption, and that mortal shall put on immortality.

And when we return, and our hearts bleed under

the pressure of an afflictive bereavement, there is a voice from Heaven saying, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

While the gospel does by no means promise you an exemption from evil, yet it presents truths which sustain and strengthen under the heaviest woes. It has promises which almost give a present Heaven. It spans the bright rainbow of peace and love over the darkest clouds.

What language of sympathy shall I employ, dear friends, so consolatory as that which fell from the lips of Jesus? What feelings can possess my heart as soothing as those which characterize a Saviour's love?

“Tis Christ and none but Christ can speak the word,
 There goes a power with his majestic voice,
 To hush the raging storm and charm its noise.
 Who but would fear and love to do his will,
 Who bids such tempests of the soul be still.”

I can but point you to Him, who can give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. The blow which has fallen upon you was unquestionably severe. The young, the innocent, the blooming in life's early morning hath gone to the tomb. Parental fondness watched with anxious solicitude over that young flower; but no human care, no love, however strong, could charm away the approach of Death. She has gone. The storms of time will beat over her quiet resting place. And though Death came to her clad in unusual horrors, yet memory will retain a fond

recollection of her sunny smiles, and we will love to think of her, as on the holy Sabbath she came to this house of prayer, to read of that Saviour who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

"As the bird to its sheltering nest,
 When the storm on the hills is abroad,
 So her spirit hath flown from this world of unrest,
 To repose on the bosom of God;
 Where the sorrows of Earth never more
 May fling o'er its brightness a stain;
 Where in rapture and love it shall ever adore,
 With a gladness unmingled with pain.
 There is weeping on earth for the lost,
 There is bowing in grief to the ground,
 But rejoicing and praise mid the sanctified host,
 For a spirit in Paradise found.
 Though brightness hath passed from the earth,
 Yet a star is new born in the sky,
 And a soul hath gone home to the land of its birth,
 Where are pleasures and fullness of joy:
 And a new harp is strung, and a new song is given
 To the breezes that float o'er the gardens of Heaven."

Let us live so that we may become like that little child: "For verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." There must be a submissiveness of heart, and a readiness of mind to receive the commands and to do the will of our heavenly Parent. There must be that childlike sense of dependence, which will lead us to a Father's hand. There must be that guilelessness of heart, and that joy in a parent's smile, which are exhibit-

ed by the little ones dependent upon earthly parents. Happy shall we be, if the Spirit of God dwell in our hearts, and lead us daily to a Father's throne.

I cannot close without observing, that while a fierce and dark disease has made its visitation in our village, disturbing a happy home, and exciting a panic and alarm in the minds of many; yet there is another malady here far more awful in its nature, more destructive in its effects: and this is the foul disease of sin, preying upon the soul, and we have reason to fear, hastening many away to the darkness and desolation of the second death. While you seek the security of your bodies, seek first, and above all, the health of your unperishable spirits. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell." While the great destroyer lingers around, making his assaults in a thousand forms, let us live so that the hope of the righteous may be ours, and our death may be the triumph of a living faith.





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